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ABSTRACT

"Adelante...con Ganas!" (Forward...with Enthusiasm) was a 3-year transitional bilingual program implemented at Burbank Middle School in the Houston Independent School District (Texas). The program consisted of three levels of bilingual instruction, from preliterate through intermediate, in which students were placed following state and district guidelines. Instruction in this program was designed for students with little or no English facility, including limited English proficient students with little or no formal schooling. An evaluation involved analysis of 3 years of program data regarding students' standardized test scores, staff surveys, parent surveys, student surveys, and class observations. The findings indicate that 269 students enrolled in the program in the 3 years. Students in the program made significant progress in mathematics and Spanish reading. At the end of the first year of instruction, English oral proficiency of students was still at the "nonspeakers" level, although measurable gains were made. All participants in the program, including students, teachers, and parents, were very satisfied with all program components. Evaluation findings also suggest that contributions to program success came through external support, the learning context, and the social-emotional context. Recommendations are made for program improvement. Four appendixes present the survey forms used in the evaluation. (Contains 18 tables and 4 references.) (SLD)

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ED 405 440

RESEARCH

Report on Educational Grants

An Evaluation Report from the Department of Research and Evaluation

¡Adelante con Ganas!: A Title VII Transitional Bilingual Program in Burbank Middle School 1993–96

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Executive Summary

¡Adelante...con Ganas!: A Title VII Transitional Bilingual Program in Burbank Middle School 1993–96

Program Description

In August 1993, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) received from the Office of Bilingual and Minority Education at the U.S. Department of Education a three-years grant to implement a Title VII program. This transitional bilingual program was implemented at Burbank Middle School and was named *¡Adelante...con Ganas!*. The first-year grant totaled $175,000 with HISD's in-kind contribution totaling $189,691. The second year grant totaled $175,000 with HISD's in-kind contribution totaling $136,477. The third year grant totaled $175,000 with HISD in-kind contribution totaling $213,836. The goal of this project was to implement a program for recent immigrant students to successfully progress through a linguistically and developmentally appropriate sequence of language and content skills in order to achieve the following:

- age and grade appropriate literacy
- English language proficiency
- grade level mastery in the content areas

The instructional program was divided into three levels: the preliterate level, the beginning level, and intermediate level. In the preliterate level, the project served students with limited literacy skills in the first language (Spanish). The program provided English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction as well as literacy and concept development and content in the first language. The ESL instruction was primarily oral, focusing on communication and vocabulary. Content instruction in the first language focused on basic content information and skills.

The beginning level developed oral English communication and vocabulary, while refining the vocabulary and grammar of the first language. Instruction in the academic areas continued concept development through the first language. The intermediate level addresses both oral and written skills in English. At the same time, first language instruction in the content areas gradually incorporated the English vocabulary of those content areas.

At the intermediate level, the program's bilingual content courses incorporated more English in order to commensurate instruction with growing English language proficiency. As a further transition toward the target language, ESL reading was substituted for Spanish reading.

In addition to the previously discussed instructional objectives, the *Adelante* program included staff training and parental involvement objectives. The parent involvement activities were designed to enhance parents' knowledge about their children and the special challenge of adolescence.

The current report is based on a combination of data that was collected during the 1995–96 school year and data that was reported in the 1993–94 and the 1995–96 evaluation reports of the *Adelante* program (HISD, 1993–94; HISD, 1994–95). The goal of the current evaluation report was to describe the implementation and the effectiveness of the *¡Adelante...con Ganas!* project in Burbank middle school during the 1993–94, through the 1995–96 school years. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What were the demographic characteristics of the students that were served by the program?
2. In what training activities did the program staff participate during 1995–96? What training activity during 1993–1996 stood out as being the most effective in achieving the *Adelante* Program goals? What additional training should be added to the *Adelante* staff training program?
3. What was the students' oral Spanish proficiency at the beginning of each of the implementation years as measured by the LAS test?
4. What was the change in students' English oral, reading, and writing proficiency as measured by the LAS test?
5. What were the changes in the students' achievements in the content areas as measured by the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) test during each of the implementation years?
6. What was the 1995–96 mean attendance of the *Adelante* students and what was the difference in attendance rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group for the three implementation years?
7. What were the 1995–96 promotion rates of the *Adelante* students and what was the difference of promotion rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group for the three implementation years?
8. What were the academic achievements of the *Adelante* graduates on the 1995–96 TAAS and what were the differences between the *Adelante* graduates and the comparison group?
9. How were the 1995–96 parents involved in the program and what were their perceptions of this involvement?
10. What were the 1995–96 students' perceptions of and reactions towards the program?
11. What were the perceived strengths of the program during the three implementation years?
12. How were the recommendations of the 1994–95 evaluation report implemented in the program during the l995–96 school year?
13. What were the recommendations of program staff, students, and parents in 1995–96, for improving the quality of the program implementation?

Findings

- A total of 269 students were enrolled in the *Adelante* program during the 1993–1996 school years. The data suggest that there was an increase in student enrollment from 82 students in 1993–94 to 94 students in 1995–96.

- About 82.4% of the students in the program reported that their country of origin was in Latin America. Sixty percent or 160 students were of Mexican origin followed by 15.4% or 42 students of Salvadoran descent. Only 7.6% originated in the United States. Ninety-nine percent of the students who completed the Home Language survey indicated that their home language was Spanish.

- During the 1995–96 school year, 40% of the *Adelante* students were classified as either Pre-Literate or Beginning ESL level, while 60% percent were in the Intermediate ESL level. This was very similar to the ESL distribution in 1993–94 and a substantial change from 1994–95 distribution. In particular, during the 1993–94 school year, 41% of students in the program were classified as either Pre-Literate or Beginning ESL level, while 59% percent of the *Adelante* students were in the in this level during the 1994–95 school year.

- Every school year the *Adelante* staff training activities included at least 30 hours of comprehensive training, provided by the district and other local agencies known for their expertise in working with the recent immigrant students. Training topics included but were not limited to: ESL strategies for pre-literate LEP students, ESL in the content area, using computers with LEP students, and parental involvement. In addition, the *Adelante* staff participated individually in training sessions that correspond to their content area.

- Answers to the staff surveys that were conducted during the three implementation years indicated that the training activities were very beneficial for the attainment of the program goals. The data indicated that for each staff member different training activity was the most effective during the three implementation years. Although several staff members indicated that no additional training was required, other staff members expressed the need to expand the *Adelante* training by including more workshops that would be focused

on instruction of students with learning disabilities, use of technology in the bilingual classroom, tutoring techniques, and customized training for the resources specialists in instructional techniques for the pre-literate students.

- The oral Spanish proficiency of students who entered the program was quite low. In particular, the mean scale score of all students on the Spanish LAS during the last three school years was between 78 to 80. According to the normative interpretation of LAS scores and cutoff levels this suggests that on average, the students who enrolled in the program were Limited Spanish Speakers.

- The majority of the students entered the *Adelante* program with Oral English score below 30 (on the LAS II test) which indicates very limited knowledge of English. The data indicated that after one year of instruction, the students made significant progress (20 points on average) in oral English. However, according to the normative interpretation of LAS scores and cutoff levels, most students were still at the Non-English Speakers category.

- The majority of the students entered the *Adelante* program with English reading score below 50 and English writing score below 25 (on the LAS test) which indicates very limited ability to read and write English. The data suggest that after one year of instruction, most of the students (1995–96 class), made significant progress both in reading and writing—most of them had English reading scores higher than 60 and English writing scores above 40. According to the normative interpretation of LAS scores and cutoff levels, they were Limited Readers and Non-Writers in English.

- The SABE test data suggested that overall the students in *Adelante* Program made significant progress both in reading and in math during each of the three implementation years. Specifically, students in the program gained about 4 NCE points in Spanish reading proficiency, and in math students gained about 6 NCE points. In reading, the largest gains were made in 1995–96 (4.89 NCE) and in math the largest gains were made during 1994–95 (7.65 NCE).

- The average attendance of the *Adelante* students during the last three school years was about 96% (included are those students that participated in the program for at least 135 instructional days). Over the last three school years, the comparison group had on average a similar attendance rate to the *Adelante* group. Only in 1995–96 the *Adelante* group had higher attendance rate than the comparison group(96.0% vs. 94.8, respectively). No significant differences on attendance rates were found between the *Adelante* graduates and the respective comparison groups

- The promotion rates of the *Adelante* students were between 84% in 1995–96 to 94% in 1993–94. In each of the implementation years the students in the *Adelante* program were promoted in higher percentages than the students in the comparison groups. The difference in promotion rates between the *Adelante* and the comparison groups was between +1% in 1994–95 to +5% in 1993–94.

- Lower percentages of *Adelante* graduates were promoted as compared to graduates of the comparison groups. In particular, the difference in promotion rates between the *Adelante* Graduates and the comparison groups was between -7% for the 93–94 graduates and -25% for the 94–95 graduates (who were ninth graders in 1995–56). The comparison of promotion data between the *Adelante* and the comparison groups should be qualified by the incomplete data for considerable number of students in both groups

- The percentages of *Adelante* graduates, who passed the minimum requirements of the TAAS, was less than 30% in the reading and the writing subtests and about 40% in the math subtest. In three out of nine comparisons on TAAS performance, the *Adelante* graduates outperformed students in the comparison group (seventh and eighth graders on the reading subtest and seventh graders on the math subtest) and in one case the students in the comparison group outperformed the *Adelante* graduates (tenth graders on the writing subtest).

- The primary mechanism for parent involvement was the parent involvement meetings that were

conducted during each of the three implementation years. According to the three yearly surveys, parents' satisfaction with all aspects of the *Adelante* program was very high. Furthermore, as the program progresses from year to year, parents' perceptions of the program enhanced considerably. Specifically, there was strong agreement with the statements "The parents' meetings were very helpful" and "I learned many important things in the parent meetings."

- On the 1995–96 Survey, parents indicated several areas of learning that took place in the parent meetings: improving the communication between parents and children; motivating children to go to school and complete homework; feedback and information on my child's behavior, academic performance, and social interaction at school; improvement of communication between parents and teachers; and, prevention of involvement with gangs, drugs and other high-risk behaviors.

- On the three yearly student surveys, the *Adelante* students reported a high degree of satisfaction both with school and with their teachers. Students felt that their teachers expect them to work hard and felt that their teachers help them do their best. The students also felt that they made a lot of progress in their studies since the beginning of the school year. However, students indicated that they still need more help from their teachers to improve their grades. Students reported considerable satisfaction with Spanish instruction. However, significant number of students indicated that they would like to move to all English instruction When the 1993–94, 1994–95, and 1995–96 student surveys' results were compared to each other no major differences were identified.

- The findings of this evaluation and previous year evaluation suggest that the contributors to the effective implementation of the *Adelante* program were in three interdependent areas: the external support, the learning context, and the social-emotional context. The Title VII grant enabled the recruiting of well-qualified teachers, offering adequate training, acquiring of appropriate instructional materials, conducting parental involvement meeting and field trips. The abundance of external support for the *Adelante* program contributed to the creation of an effective learning context. Specifically, the well designed bilingual-transitional program could not have been implemented without the additional bilingual teachers, the content resource specialists, and the aides who were recruited specifically for the *Adelante* program. The students' progress in the *Adelante* program can also be attributed to the strong and warm social-emotional context which was created by the program staff and that was supported by the school and district staff. The students and staff felt that they were all part of one community.

- The 1993–94 and the 1994–95 *Adelante...con Ganas* evaluation reports made several recommendations. Each of the major recommendations were implemented in the 1994–95 and in the 1995–96 school years, respectively.

- The 1995–96 staff recommendations for program improvements focused on the following areas: accelerated instruction of low schooled students, improving the referral procedure for learning disabled students; and, enhancing the physical and psychological integration of the *Adelante* cluster. The 1995–96 *Adelante* students suggested improvements in two areas: expand English instruction; and improve student--teacher interaction. The parents mentioned two improvement suggestions: increase parent participation in the parent meetings and continue to offer the bilingual program in the middle school.

Recommendations

1. Results of the language and academic assessments of immigrant students who enrolled in the *Adelante* program indicated very low Spanish, English, and academic proficiency. The *Adelante* staff with support from the Multilingual and Accelerated Instruction Department need to consider expansion of the remedial services that can be offered to these students and their parents.

2. Results of the LAS test suggest that the English oral proficiency of most students in the program after one year of instruction was at the Non-English Speakers level. Teachers expressed a need to intensify the ESL component of their training. Students and parents expressed a need to learn more English. Therefore, the ESL staff

training and instructional effort should be continued and intensified. The staff may consider offering after school ESL classes for students and their parents.

3. The two six grade classes were located in rooms that were distant from the rest of the *Adelante* classes. It is suggested to house all the *Adelante* students in close physical proximity and increase the number of the cluster activities so that the physical and psychological integration will be enhanced.

4. Students mentioned several incidents of friction with teachers in the program during the 1995–96 school year. Therefore, the program staff need to assess together with students the relationships between teachers and students, design and implement means to improve student–teacher interactions.

¡Adelante...con Ganas!:
A Title VII Transitional Bilingual Program in Burbank Middle School 1993–96

The purpose of this report was to describe the implementation and the effectiveness of the ¡Adelante...con Ganas! project, a three-year Title VII grant for a bilingual program in Burbank Middle School in the Houston Independent School District. The program consisted of three levels of bilingual instruction: Preliterate, Beginning, and Intermediate. Students were placed in one of the three levels following state and district guidelines. The instruction implemented in this program was designed to serve students with little or no English facility. In addition, it addressed the needs of those Limited English Proficient (LEP) students with little or no formal schooling, a condition that resulted in a low level of academic achievement. The Transitional Bilingual Program that was used, employed both English and Spanish as the medium of instruction. The present evaluation involved analysis of three years of data regarding students' standardized tests data, staff surveys, parent surveys, student surveys, and class observations. The findings indicate that 269 students enrolled the program during 1993–94 through 1995–96 school years. Students in the program made significant progress in Math and Spanish Reading. At the end of the first year, English oral proficiency of students was at the Non-Speakers level although gains were made. All participants in the program including students, teachers and parents, were very satisfied with all of the program components. Recommendations for improvements are discussed.

Introduction

Program Description

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) received from the office of Bilingual and Minority Education at the U.S. Department of Education, a three-years grant for implementing a Title VII program starting in August 1993 and ending in May 1996. The three-years grants totaled $175,000 each and HISD's in-kind contribution totaled $189,691 for the 1993–94 school year, $136,477 for the 1994–95 school year, and $213,836 for the 1995–96 school year. Program objectives included instructional, training, and parental involvement objectives and were based on needs of LEP students at Burbank Middle School and in neighboring schools who have been identified as meeting the criteria for eligibility and who have never been served under Title VII. New students who met the eligibility criteria were allowed to participate as they enrolled.

Description of Project Context

Approximately 11 percent of the 1991–92 HISD student population was born outside of the United States. Almost 85 percent of these students originated from Spanish speaking countries. Approximately one third of these students were recent immigrants who have been attending a U.S. school for less than three years.

At Burbank Middle School, the number of recent arrivals who originated in Spanish speaking countries has been rising rapidly. In the 1991–92 school year, there were over 400 LEP students enrolled out of a school population of 1560. Eighty-six of those LEP students (approximately 6 percent of the school population) were recent arrivals. In August, 1993, one hundred recent arrivals having little or no English skills

were identified as most in need of specialized instruction.

In a further effort to accommodate similar LEP students in neighboring middle schools without a specialized program, Burbank has been accepting transfer students into the *Adelante* program on a need/space availability basis. A number of area middle schools have shown considerable interest in the project and several LEP students have already transferred into the program.

Criteria for Student Enrollment

The target population that project *¡Adelante...con Ganas!* served was monolingual Spanish speaking middle school students who have arrived in the district during the last two years. They have been identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) by the school's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) according to state and district guidelines.

The students identified as most in need of specialized instruction were recent arrivals to Burbank having few or no English skills. Some students entering the project had 3 years or less of formal previous schooling. These students were non-literate or semi-literate in their native language and were classified in the District as preliterate or "low-schooled". Instruction for these recent arrivals included survival skills for coping with the American school system, basic literacy skills, and an introduction to oral/aural communication in English.

Project Goals and Objectives

Program Goal

The overall goal of this program was for students to successfully progress through a linguistically and developmentally appropriate sequence of language and content skills and move into the district's traditional Advanced ESL program.

Instructional Objectives

Project *Adelante* was designed to meet the following instructional objectives:

1. Students entering the program at the preliterate level and successfully progressing through the intermediate level will demonstrate literacy as measured by one or more of the following:
   - Portfolio Assessments;
   - Anecdotal Records/Teachers' Survey;
   - Standardized Achievement Tests (SABE).
2. Project students will demonstrate oral English proficiency at Level 3 of the English LAS test by the end of their intermediate year.
3. Project students, who enter at a given ESL level, will progress through higher subsequent levels as they master the state ESL and grade Essential Elements as measured by:
   - teacher check lists;
   - project progress reports;
   - LPAC review.
4. Seventy percent of students who participate in the project at least two years and complete the intermediate level will continue into high school as indicated by:
   - student survey;
   - High School 4 year plan;
   - 9th grade course selection sheets.

Training Objective

Project staff will participate in a minimum of 40 hours of comprehensive training, provided by the district and other local agencies known for their expertise in working with the target population. Training topics will include but not be limited to:

- Native Language Instruction;
- Teaching the Preliterate student;
- ESL in the Content Area;
- Interdisciplinary Planning;
- Cooperative Learning;
- Parental Involvement; and
- Multicultural Awareness.

Parent Involvement Objective

Parents of the project students will participate in at least 3 school sponsored activities designed to enhance student self-esteem.

Project Implementation

Students who entered the *¡Adelante...con Ganas!* project in August of each school year and remained at the project site throughout the school year received ten full months of instructional services. Those students who came to the project school after the beginning of the school year or moved away before the end of the school year, received instructional services for the entire time they were enrolled in the project school. Each day, the project students received six class periods of instruction from project teachers and one class period of Physical Education with non-project teachers in a mainstream setting.

Instructional Program

The instructional program was divided into three levels: the preliterate, the beginning, and intermediate. The program instructional components are depicted in Figure 1 (page 9). In the preliterate levels, the project served students with limited literacy skills

in the first language. For the preliterate students, the program provided ESL instruction as well as literacy and concept development and content in the first language. ESL instruction was primarily oral, focusing on communication and vocabulary. Content instruction in the first language focused on basic content information and skills.

In the beginning and intermediate levels, the program was designed to serve the needs of students with higher levels of native language literacy and academic skills. The beginning levels developed oral English communication and vocabulary, while refining the vocabulary and grammar of the first language. Instruction in the academic area continued concept development through the first language. The intermediate level addressed both oral and written skills in English. At the same time, first language instruction in the content areas gradually incorporated the English vocabulary of those content areas.

Project students participated in the following courses:

Spanish Language Arts,
Spanish Reading,
Bilingual Math, Science, and Social Studies,
English as a Second Language,
Elective, and
Physical Education.

English as a Second Language (ESL) and ESL Reading addressed the need for basic English Language Arts instruction. These courses provided the LEP student with systematic and sequential instruction of English language skills. The focus was on communicative competency, grammar, speaking, writing, composition, and the structure of the language.

Students at the preliterate and beginning levels worked to develop oral communication and vocabulary. At these levels, reading and writing activities were primarily structured and controlled. Students in the intermediate level used an equal amount of time for written and oral skills. Students at all levels were encouraged to interact with one another in order to practice their English skills and gain confidence in their abilities. Activities were created to ensure this interaction.

Spanish Language Arts is the counterpart to ESL. In this class, the students' Spanish literacy skills were developed in order to provide them with the tools to enhance their cognitive skills as the base for second language transfer. The learning focused on developing and strengthening the students' home language and incorporates many of the same strategies used in ESL and English Language Arts. In the Spanish Reading class, the emphasis was literacy. The students were exposed to a print rich environment with a variety of literature and other reading materials available in Spanish such as newspapers and magazines. Those students whose formal schooling has been interrupted or completely lacking were the focus of special literacy instruction in the Spanish Language Arts, Spanish reading, and ESL classes.

The preliterate and beginning levels content area courses were primarily taught using Spanish although English was gradually incorporated. This provided

Preliterate Level		Beginning Level		Intermediate Level	
Subject	**Class period**	**Subject**	**Class period**	**Subject**	**Class period**
Preliterate ESL	1	Beginning ESL	1	Intermediate ESL	1
Span. Reading/ Literacy	1	Span. Reading	1	ESL Reading	1
Spanish Language/Arts	1	Spanish Language/Arts	1	Spanish Lang./Arts	1
Bilingual Math	1	Bilingual Math	1	Bilingual Math	1
Bilingual Science	1	Bilingual Science	1	Bilingual Science	1
Bilingual Social Studies	1	Bilingual Social Studies	1	Bilingual Social Studies	1
Physical Education *	1	Physical Education*	1	Physical Education*	1
Elective*	1	Elective*	1	Elective*	1

* All English instruction. Students are mainstreamed, but the PE and the elective teachers were trained in ESL methodology.

Figure 1: Instructional Program

students the opportunity to acquire new concepts in Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science in their native language while developing proficiency in the English language.

In the intermediate level courses, the instruction gradually increased basic English use, which the students understood. As the year progressed and the students became more proficient with the language, the amount of context embedded material was reduced. Even when the instruction was in English, the teacher used the native language for comprehension checks, clarification, positive reinforcement, and individual tutoring. In addition, students were involved in cooperative project work in Spanish to generate, evaluate and solve problems illustrating concepts learned.

Physical Education was taught in English. The identified instructor was a certified PE teacher who received some additional multicultural/ESL training provided by the school and this project in order to become aware of the learning needs of the LEP student. During P.E. class, students were mainstreamed and interacted with their peer group in the language they choose.

Instructional Times for all grade and ESL levels

The instructional program was divided into three levels: The preliterate level, the beginning level and the intermediate level. The instructional time was divided equally among subjects for all grade and ESL levels as Figure 1 indicates.

Training of Program Staff

A Summer Institute was planned and implemented during early August, of each of the three school years. In addition, staff training and development for all project personnel was ongoing throughout the school year. Project teachers were encouraged and supported by the project to attend workshops and conferences which addressed appropriate topics. During the three implementation years, all project teachers participated in at least 31 hours of comprehensive training provided by the District and other local and national agencies known for their expertise in working with the target population. Training included the following topics:

Native Language Instruction
Teaching the Preliterate student
ESL in the Content Area
Interdisciplinary Planning
Cooperative Learning
Computer software for LEP students
Parental Involvement

Multicultural Awareness

A Summer Institute was conducted during August, 1995. This training was specifically designed for project teachers in conjunction with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratories (SEDL). The institute topics included:

Native Language Instruction,
ESL in the Content Area,
Interdisciplinary Planning,
Cooperative Learning, and
Incorporating computers use in the classroom.

Other Program Elements

The teachers for this program had classrooms in close proximity to each other wherever possible. This configuration increased teacher dialogue and provided opportunities for interdisciplinary planning. Furthermore, thematic units across the curriculum were used instead of trying to address each subject separately. For example, when studying the history of Texas in social studies, the topic was also integrated into the readings of the Spanish and ESL classes.

The thematic units were both participatory and cooperative. Instructional strategies emphasized small group interaction, heterogeneous grouping, and active, informal learning activities that required a high degree of interaction. This approach enabled students to take an active part in their own learning while exploring a theme in depth.

The core group of project teachers collaborated as an interdisciplinary team working together to plan, develop, and implement integrated lessons. In addition, the teachers had worked with non-project Art and Music teachers to incorporate mainstream students into the interdisciplinary units. This cooperative atmosphere provided additional opportunities for project students to interact with mainstream students while working on cooperative subjects.

In addition to Burbank's in-house computer writing lab (COMPAQ computers), the District's Multilingual Department provided a bilingual computer lab at the project site. This bilingual computer lab consisted of five MAC LCII computers and an Imagewriter printer. Seven additional MAC LCIII and two printers were bought with funds from the *Adelante* project's federal grant's budget. These computers were incorporated into the project and became a vital component in all areas of the instructional program. Project students received instruction in basic computer skills and in the use of a word processing program for students. Utilizing word processing capabilities, project

students were able to enhance their writing skills both in English and Spanish as they published their work.

Field trips into the community were especially valuable to students with limited educational experiences. The trips allowed for the development of cultural orientation and survival skills. Such activities were included in order to provide a basis for an accentuated range of language activities. In addition, students were able to share with their non-English speaking parents information about important educational community resources. During each of the three years of program implementation 4–5 very successful field trips took place in which the students were able to receive real life practice while moving about in the community. These excursions included: family-owned business plants, local historical sites, zoological gardens, and the museum of natural science.

Materials Used in the Program

Mainstream all-English textbooks, which were designed for monolingual English speakers, were inappropriate for use with LEP students. Therefore, the project teachers had identified, and purchased with project funds, native language texts and materials in all subject areas that present key concepts. Because the students had such widely varying levels of literacy, project teachers worked collaboratively to review and select age-appropriate materials that encompassed all levels of ability. Written in the student's native language, these materials promoted cognitive growth and academic success in the first language. Skills and concepts were then transferred to the students' second and developing language, English. Appendix A details the major textbooks that were used in the project.

Project Information and Experience Dissemination

Curriculum materials and lessons developed by the project teachers were made available to non-project schools at the end of the Summer of each of the three implementation years. These materials were revised and additional lessons were developed during the Summer 1996. They were available to non-project teachers by August, 1996. Training for ESL and content teachers has been opened to other middle schools in the District in an effort to expand the delivery of Bilingual instruction to similar populations in non-project schools.

Pre-referral Evaluation Procedures

Gifted & Talented Procedure. The gifted and talented identification process consisted of two distinct stages. In the first stage, a talent pool was identified through population assessment and nomination by teachers. The second phase involved compiling and processing student information. In this and late phases of the identification process, both objective and subjective standards were used in considering students for the program. A pool of students to be considered may be obtained from both past performances and nominations.

In this Title VII project, four students have been monitored for future consideration by gifted/talented programs. High achievement in both English LAS and SABE scores were used for monitoring these students. Class grades and teacher observations and recommendations were also considered. . One student was admitted into the Gifted & Talented program and has been doing very well. Before this project's inception, LEP students were rarely monitored or considered for the Gifted & Talented program.

Special Education Procedures (Exceptional Education). Pre-referral procedures for Exceptional Education begin with parent and teacher observations at home and in the classroom. When problems were observed, a number of factors were then considered (language, mental, emotional, and achievement level). These observations were then reported to the Child Study Department and the referral process begun.

In the first year of the Title VII project, one student was observed to have serious emotional and behavioral problems. Because he was in a setting where teachers could observe him in his native language and communicate freely with his mother, his disabilities were quickly identified. Furthermore, the project teachers were able to act as liaisons between the student's mother and the school referral committee. In a regular all-English program, this student's problems could have gone unidentified for either a year or two or until he had learned enough English to make himself understood.

Staff Qualifications

Project Teacher/Coordinator. The project teacher/coordinator taught Spanish Language Arts in the project and coordinated, in collaboration with the Director of Bilingual Programs and Burbank Middle School's principal, the implementation and operation of this project. The project coordinator has nineteen years experience in HISD as a teacher and bilingual consultant. She is certified in English and Spanish and holds a masters degree in Applied English Linguistics and an Ed.D. degree in ESL and Bilingual Education. She has been the ESL coordinator at Burbank Middle School since 1987 and is knowledge-

able and well versed in the instructional needs of LEP students.

School Principal. The Burbank Middle School Principal has been with HISD over 18 years. She has considerable experience in managing schools with large Hispanic populations and has worked closely with the Hispanic community. The principal provided instructional leadership and management for both the students and teachers of this project. She also worked with parents, students, and teachers to promote the success of this project.

Director of Instruction for Multilingual Programs. The Director of Instruction for Multilingual Programs has been an administrator in Houston's Bilingual programs for over twelve years, and has developed bilingual and ESL programs at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. She is well versed in the identification, placement and overall instruction of LEP students, and has a strong desire to promote bilingual programs at the secondary levels. She also participates in the recruitment and training of ESL and bilingual teachers. The Director of Instruction for Multilingual Programs with the Teacher/Coordinator and the school Principal coordinated the implementation and operation of this program.

Project Teachers and Content Resource Specialists. In the state of Texas, teachers may be certified in bilingual education for grades Pre-K through 6 only. Project *Adelante* included two HISD teachers certified in bilingual education for the sixth grade, who are not normally placed at the middle school level. One teacher had the beginning level sixth grade students while the other teacher had the intermediate level sixth grade students. These teachers provided instruction in all areas described above except Physical Education.

In the seventh and eighth grade, all teachers and content resource specialists were bilingual. They were also certified in their content area. The ESL teacher had an ESL endorsement with extensive education in linguistics and ESL methodology. Spanish Language Arts and Spanish reading requires a teacher to be certified in Language Arts, as well as fluent in Spanish. The teacher has a native level Spanish language skills as well as a knowledge and genuine appreciation of the Hispanic culture. The math, science, and social studies resource specialists were certified in their content area and are fluent Spanish speakers.

All of the project teachers had at least a Bachelor's degree with the appropriate Texas Teacher Certifications and endorsements. In addition, with the exception of the ESL teacher, all are bilingual in Spanish and English and have passed the appropriate test of Spanish language skills.

Content Resource Specialists. The two content resource specialists were vital members of the project team. They are fluent in Spanish and English. In addition they were required to pass aptitude and bilingual tests.

The functions of these specialists included the following tasks:

1. Tutoring project students.
2. Assisting project students who enroll later in the year
3. Translating:
   between students and teachers;
   between teachers and parents;
   between students or parents and office staff.
4. Making telephone calls:
   to parents to check on excessive absences;
   to schedule teacher/parents conferences;
   to invite parents to attend a school activity.

The specialists also assisted with maintaining and updating LEP records for project students.

Research and Evaluation Specialist. The research and evaluation specialist designed the program evaluation, compiled and analyzed data, and wrote the end of year evaluation reports on the ¡*Adelante* con ...Ganas! program. The research and evaluation specialist holds a Ph.D. in Organizational Psychology and has eight years of research, training, and development experience in various organizations. For the last three years he has been working in the Research and Evaluation department within Houston Independent School District where he has been responsible for the evaluation of Multilingual and Magnet programs in the district.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement was a critical factor in forming a positive link between the school and home in support of the student. Involving parents in meaningful school activities provides that link. For this reason parents were invited regularly to attend classroom presentations of student projects and oral reports as well as to other activities such as field trips. A number of parents accompanied the classes on their field trips.

The project parents and teachers met several

times during each of the three implementation years. These monthly parent meetings were very successful and will be continued after 1995–96 school year.

Evaluation Goal and Research Questions

The current report is based on a combination of data that was collected during the 1995–96 school year and data that was reported in the 1993–94 and the 1995–96 evaluation reports of the *Adelante* program (HISD, 1993–94; HISD, 1994–95). The goal of the current evaluation report was to describe the implementation and the effectiveness of the *¡Adelante...con Ganas!* project in Burbank middle school during the 1993–94 through the 1995–96 school years. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What were the demographic characteristics of the students that were served by the program?
2. In what training activities did the program staff participate during 1995–96? What training activity during 1993–1996 stood out as being the most effective in achieving the *Adelante* Program goals? What additional training should be added to the *Adelante* staff training program?
3. What was the students' oral Spanish proficiency at the beginning of each of the implementation years as measured by the LAS test?
4. What was the change in students' English oral, reading, and writing proficiency as measured by the LAS test?
5. What were the changes in the students' achievements in the content areas as measured by the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) test during each of the implementation years?
6. What was the 1995–96 mean attendance of the *Adelante* students and what was the difference in attendance rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group for the three implementation years?
7. What were the 1995–96 promotion rates of the *Adelante* students and what was the difference of promotion rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group for the three implementation years?
8. What were the academic achievements of the *Adelante* graduates on the 1995–96 TAAS and what were the differences between the *Adelante* graduates and the comparison group?
9. How were the 1995–96 parents involved in the program and what were their perceptions of this involvement?
10. What were the 1995–96 students' perceptions of and reactions towards the program?
11. What were the perceived strengths of the program during the three implementation years?
12. How were the recommendations of the 1994–95 evaluation report implemented in the program during the l995–96 school year?
13. What were the recommendations of program staff, students, and parents in 1995–96, for improving the quality of the program implementation?

Method

Participants

The *Adelante* program served more than 375 students during the three implementation years (1993–94, 1994–95, and 1995–96). Since the target population of the program included recent immigrants, about 20% of those students entered the program after it had already been started or left it before the end of each school year. Therefore, in order to evaluate the effects of the program, the participants in this program evaluation were only those students that were enrolled in the *Adelante* program for at least 135 instructional days. The other participants in this evaluation were: the students' parents, the program staff-teachers (n=6), content resource specialists (n=2), the project coordinator, the school principal, and the Bilingual and ESL programs director at the Multilingual and Accelerated Instruction Department.

In order to adequately assess the effects of the *Adelante* program on students' performance, three comparison groups had to be formed in the first, second, and third years of implementation. The identification of students for the comparison groups was performed by matching the following variables: Ethnicity-Hispanic, LEP status-identified as LEP and served by bilingual or ESL certified teachers, Program Placement–ESL. In addition, computerized matching of the *Adelante* students with the comparison groups were performed with respect to the following variables: ESL Level, and Original Date of Entry to the program. Based on these matching variables, 159 students were identified as a comparison group for the first year of implementation, 148 were identified as a comparison group for the second year of implementation, and 239 were identified as a comparison group for the third year of implementation.

Evaluation Design and Data Collection Procedures

The current report is based on a combination of data that were collected during the 1995–96 school year and data that was reported in the 1993–94 and the 1995–96 evaluation reports of the *Adelante* program. In order to document and analyze the *Adelante* program's success during its three years of implementation, a comprehensive evaluation design was used. This evaluation design is based on analysis of several data sources that are summarized in **Table 1.**

1. Oral Language Proficiency in Spanish was measured by LAS II-Spanish (for technical information see next section) as the students entered the program. Oral Language Proficiency in English was measured by LAS II-English (for technical information see next section) at the end of the school year.
2. Students' perceptions of the quality of the program and their feedback on needed improvements was elicited through the student survey, written in Spanish, which included both open and closed questions (see **Appendix B**). The student survey was conducted during the end of the Spring semester. The response rate for each of the student surveys during the last three implementation years was about 90%.
3. Project Staff Perceptions of the quality of the program and their feedback on needed improvements was elicited through staff survey that included only open questions (see **Appendix C**). The staff surveys were conducted each school year at the end of the spring semester. The response rate for each of the staff surveys during the last three implementation years was 100%.
4. Parental Involvement Assessment was conducted by means of the program sign-in forms and the parent survey. Parents' perceptions of the quality of the parent involvement meetings and their feedback on needed improvements was elicited through the parent survey written in Spanish, which included both open and closed questions (see **Appendix D**). The parent survey was conducted during the last parent involvement meeting of the school year. In addition, surveys were sent to parents who did not attend the last parent program. The response rate for each of the parent surveys during the last three school years was about 45%.
5. Ethnographic Observations were conducted by the research specialist in the six bilingual/ESL classes that participated in the *Adelante* program. The observations were conducted both in the Fall and the Spring semesters of each of three implementation years.
6. Promotion and attendance rates of the project group and the comparison group for the three years of implementation were based on data from the HISD Students' Masterfile.
7. Academic Achievements of the project group and the comparison group was based on TAAS and SABE scores. The TAAS scores were taken from Texas Education Agency (TEA) TAAS reports and the SABE scores were taken from the SABE school reports.

Table 1: Data Collection and Analysis Framework

Domains/Outcomes/Goal Areas	Instruments	Statistical Analysis	Content Analysis
1. English/Spanish Oral Language Proficiency	LAS II (Spanish & English versions)	Descriptive Statistics	N/A
2. Students Perceptions	Student Survey	Descriptive Statistics	Yes
3. Project Staff Perceptions	Surveys/Interviews	N/A	Yes
4. Parental Involvement Assessment	Parent Survey Sign-in Forms	Descriptive Statistics	Yes
5. Ethnographic Observations	Notes	N/A	Yes
6. Promotion and Attendance of Project group and Comparison group	Student Master File	Descriptive Statistics	N/A
7. Academic Achievements (Reading and Math)	SABE TAAS	T-Test	N/A
8. English Reading/Writing Proficiency	LAS (Forms 2a, 2B, 3A, 3B)	T-Test	N/A

8. English Reading/Writing Proficiency was measured by LAS Reading and Writing tests (for technical information see next section) that were given only to the 1995–96 *Adelante* students as they entered the program and in the end of the school year. Forms 2A and 2B were used to test all the sixth graders and the Level I (ESL) seventh graders and Forms 3A and 3B were used to test all the eight graders and Level II seventh graders.

Reliability and objectivity of the methods used to identify needs and to assess students performance

In 1979, Houston ISD implemented an official identification process to identify LEP students. Since then the State of Texas has required that an English written achievement test and an oral language proficiency test be included in the identification process. The following tests are used in the Houston ISD for identification and placement into the project as-well-as for assessment of student achievement.

- Language Assessment Scales II (LAS II). For the identification of LEP students eligible for this program and for assessment of linguistic improvement, the oral Language Assessment Scales Level II (LAS) for grades 6 and up, both in English and Spanish were administered. The LAS II tests provide an overall picture of oral linguistic proficiency based on a student's performance across four linguistic subsystems. Neither is a translated test but rather both are two totally independent tests, each based on the same analysis of four language subsystems. The validity and reliability of the oral tests have been well-established since 1976 (see De Avila & Duncan, 1981).
- Language Assessment Scales. To assess reading and writing improvements during the 1995–96 school year the Reading/Writing LAS test was used. The validity and reliability of these tests have been well-established see technical report by Duncan, S. E. and De Avila, E. A (1988).
- Spanish Assessment of Basic Skills (SABE). To assess native language proficiency and literacy, the SABE was administered. This test is a series of norm-referenced tests for grades one through eight. It was designed to measure achievement in the basic skills according to state and district curricula and is used for students who receive instruction in Spanish. It assesses achievement in areas such as reading comprehension, language use, math computation and math concepts. Assessment data provided by the test include grade equivalency, stanines and national percentiles. Since the SABE combines characteristics of norm-referenced as well as criterion-referenced tests, it provides extensive information about the instructional needs of students. The validity and reliability of the tests have been well-established since 1988 (see SABE Technical Report, 1988).
- Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). To assess academic performance of the project students, the TAAS was administered to graduates of the *Adelante* program in the third year of the project. This test is a series of criterion-referenced tests for grades three through eight and exit level. It was designed to measure student progress toward mastering the State of Texas Essential Elements in reading, writing mathematics, social studies, and science. Assessment data provided by the test include percent passing, normal curve equivalents (NCE) and state percentiles. The validity and reliability of the tests have been well-established (see Texas Assessment Program-Technical Digest, 1995).

Data Analysis

The STATVIEW software package was used to perform the statistical analysis on the SABE scores and English LAS scores. It was also used to produce frequency distributions responses to the staff, student, and the parent surveys. The EXCEL software package was used to summarize data from the three questionnaires. Content analysis was employed to summarize and extract patterns of responses to the open questions on the surveys, the observations and the interviews. SPSS was used to match the comparison group to the *Adelante* group and also to produce descriptive and inferential statistics regarding the TAAS performance, and promotion and attendance data of each groups.

Results

What were the demographic characteristics of the students that were served by the program?

Table 2 presents the distribution of students that were enrolled for at least 135 instructional days in the *Adelante* con Ganas program by grade level and by school year.

Table 2: Distribution of the Adelante Students (enrolled for at least 135 instructional days) by Grade Level and by School Year

Grade	93–94	94–95	95–96	93-96 Total
6th	23	31	27	81
7th	33	38	45	116
8th	26	24	22	72
Total	82	93	94	269

The results in Table 2 indicate that a total of 269 students were enrolled in the *Adelante* program during the last three school years. The data also suggests that there was an increase in student enrollment from 82 students in 1993–94 to 94 students in 1995–96. **Table 3** presents the number of students in the program by country of origin.

As can be seen from Table 3, 84%–95% of the students in the program reported that their country of origin was in Latin America. Sixty percent or 160 students were of Mexican origin followed by 15.4% or 42 students of Salvadoran descent. Only 7.6% originated in the United States. Although about 6.5% of the students did not report their country of origin, the program staff confirmed that most of them originated in Latin America. Ninety-nine percent of the students who completed the Home Language survey indicated that their home language was Spanish.

Based on students' LAS scores both in Spanish and English, and the students' SABE scores, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) assigned the incoming students to different instructional levels. **Table 4** presents the distribution of students in the program by ESL instructional levels and by grades.

The results in Table 4 indicate that 40% of students in the program during the 1995–96 school year were classified as either Pre-Literate or Beginning ESL level, while 60% percent of the *Adelante* students were in the Intermediate ESL level. This was very similar to the ESL distribution in 1993–94 and a substantial change from 1994–95 distribution. In particular, during the 1993–94 school year, 41% of students in the program were classified as either Pre-Literate or Beginning ESL level, while 59% percent of the *Adelante* students were in the in this level during the 1994–95 school year.

Based on this distribution and the additional students who entered the program after it had been started, 2 classes per grade level, one per each ESL level, were formed during the 1995–96 school year. Previous years' class designs are detailed in the 1993–94 and 1994–95 evaluation reports.

In what training activities did the program staff participate during 1995–96? What training activity during 1993–1996 stood out as being the most effective in achieving the *Adelante* Program goals? What additional training should be added to the *Adelante* staff training program?

Table 5 details the training activities in which the program staff took part before and during the 1995–96

Table 3: Distribution of Students' Percentages (enrolled for at least 135 instructional days) by Country of Origin and by School Year

School Year	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	Total
Number of Students	82	93	94	269
Country of Origin				
Costa Rica	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.4%
El-Salvador	14.6%	14.0%	19.1%	15.4%
Guatemala	0.0%	0.0	4.3%	1.5%
Honduras	1.2%	5.4%	5.3%	3.9%
Mexico	59.8%	64.5%	63.8%	60.6%
Nicaragua	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	0.7%
USA	8.5%	10.8%	4.3%	7.6%
Missing	15.9%	5.4%	0.0%	6.47%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 4: Distribution of Adelante Students by ESL Instructional Levels and by Grades.

ESL Level	Preliterate & Beginning			Intermediate		
School Year	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96
Number of Students	34	51	39	48	35	58
Percent of all Students	41%	59%	40%	59%	41%	60%
6th	56%	52%	42%	44%	48%	58%
7th	36%	56%	43%	64%	44%	57%
8th	35%	76%	33%	65%	24%	67%

school year. In addition to the training activities listed in Table 5, members of the program staff participated individually in training sessions that corresponded to their area of interest. For example, the program coordinator participated in the 1996 National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE) conference (3 days), Southwest Educational Laboratory (SEDL) 1995 workshop on Parental Involvement (3 hours), and the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Affairs (OBEMALA) Conference (2 days). Several staff members attended the : Texas Association of Hispanic School Administrators Conference (one day), Schools of Excellence Conference (one day), Mathematics Summit (one day). *Adelante* staff members participated also in several content-related inservices that focused on their areas of specialization.

Answers to the staff surveys that were conducted during the three implementation years indicated that the training activities were very beneficial for the attainment of the program goals (see the 1993–94 and 1994–95 Evaluation Reports). The *Adelante* staff was asked on the 1995–96 survey to indicate the training activity that stood out as being the most effective in achieving the *Adelante* Program goals during 1993–1996. The following are quotes from the staff answers to this question:

> Parental Involvement was the training activity that was the most effective for me. Since I personally have had considerable university training in all areas addressed by the project, most of the training for the project was a review for me. However, the parental involvement training in year 2 and 3 provided a much clearer view of how the parents felt about their ability to help their children in school. It also provided a number of suggestions/ strategies which any parent, literate or not, can use to help their child with school. This information has proven invaluable when talking to parents of recently arriving students.

> The believe in the theory in which the *Adelante* program is based is the most effective training to accomplish the goals set by this program. Every teacher that is part of the program should be able to either go to Mr. Cunning's conference or take a

Table 5: Adelante Staff Training Activities in 1995–96

	Subject	Presenter	Date	Time -hrs.	Participants
1.	The Preliterate Student	Dr. Nancy Ramos	8/7/95	6	21
2.	ESL in the Content Area	Dr. Nancy Ramos	8/8/95	6	21
3.	Writing Model Lessons	Dr. Linda Velasquez	8/9/95	6	10
4.	Modifying Instruction for the Preliterate Student	Dr. Linda Velasquez	11/1/95	3	8
5.	Parental Involvement	Ms. Maggie Rivas	2/8/96	3	9
6.	ESL in the Content Area & Modifying Curriculum for the Preliterate Student	Dr. Linda Velasquez	4/4/96	6	9

class dedicated to understand and comprehend his theory.

One very good session was a visit by Rogelio Chavez of San Antonio, who spoke about our type of student. He seemed to zero in on our problems, and understood the bilingual student well.

The training concerning how to identify and work with pre-literate and low-schooled students.

How to teach ESL in the content area. These kids need to learn English, but they can ill afford lagging behind in Math or Science or History. Then we teachers have to be able to answer the question of how to teach English and Math and Social Studies at the same time.

The preceding quotes indicate that for each staff member different training activity was the most effective during the three implementation years. When asked about additional recommended training, several staff members indicated that no additional training was required. However, other staff members expressed the need to expand the *Adelante* training by including more workshops that would be focused on instruction of students with learning disabilities, use of technology in the bilingual classroom, tutoring techniques, and customized training for the resource specialists in instructional techniques for the pre-literate students.

What was the students' oral Spanish proficiency at the beginning of each of the implementation years as measured by the LAS test?

Upon entering the *Adelante* program the oral proficiency of the students' first language (Spanish), was measured by the LAS test. **Table 6** presents the students' mean LAS scale scores on the Spanish oral proficiency test disagregated by grade level and by school year.

As can be seen in Table 6 the mean scale score of all students who were tested with the Spanish LAS during the last three school years was 78–80. According to the normative interpretation of LAS scores and cutoff levels (see De Avila & Duncan, 1981), this suggests that on average, the students who enrolled in the program were Limited Spanish Speakers.

What was the change in students' English oral, reading, and writing proficiency as measured by the LAS test?

To measure the progress of the *Adelante* students in English proficiency, the LAS test was administered. During the 1994–95 and 1995–96 school years the Oral English was measured (in 1993–94 the LAS oral English was administered only at the end of the year). In 1995–96, the LAS Reading/Writing test was added. **Table 7** depicts the *t-test* results for the comparison of the pre (at the beginning of the school year) and post (at the end of the school year) LAS oral English scores for 1994–95 and 1995–96.

The results of the *t-test* indicate that during the last two school years the *Adelante* students in all the three grade levels made significant progress on the Oral English LAS test. In particular, the *Adelante* students advanced 17.3 points in 1994–95 and 22.7 points in 1995–96. The largest progress in both school years (23.9 points and 29.2) was made by students in grade seven, while the smallest advancement was made by students in grade six (8.5 points and 14.3). It is also notable that overall the 1995–96 students (particularly in grade six and seven) made larger gains in English oral proficiency than the 1994–95 students.

In general, the majority of the students entered the *Adelante* program with LAS score below 30 which

Table 6: Adelante students' mean LAS Scale Scores on the Spanish Oral Proficiency Test Disagregated by Grade Level and by School Year.

School Year	1993–94		1994–95		1995–96	
Grade	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score	N	Mean Score
6th	23	71	30	86	27	83
7th	33	78	29	70	38	80
8th	25	83	14	80	17	77
Total/Mean	81	78	73	78	82	80

Table 7: *t-test* Analysis Comparing Pre and Post LAS Oral English Scores for 1994–95 and 1995–96

School Year	1994–95		1995–96	
Grade	N	Mean Difference	N	Mean Difference
6th	29	8.5*	20	14.3**
7th	32	23.9***	40	29.2***
8th	18	19.9***	22	18.8***
Total/Mean	81	17.3***	84	22.7***

* p<.01 ** p<.001 *** p<.0001

indicates very limited knowledge of English. As the data above suggest, after one year of instruction, most of the students made significant progress in oral English-most of them had scores higher than 34, however, they were still at the Non-English Speakers category (according to the normative interpretation of LAS scores and cutoff levels, see De Avila & Duncan, 1981).

Table 8 depicts the *t-test* results regarding the comparison of the pre (at the beginning of the school year) and post (at the end of the school year) Reading/ Writing English LAS scores for 1995–96.

The results of the *t-test* indicate that during 1995–96 the *Adelante* students in grades seven and eight made significant progress on the Reading and Writing LAS test. In particular, the seventh graders advanced on average more than 20 points both on the reading and writing English test. The eight graders advanced 14 points on the reading and 19 point on the writing English tests.

In general, the majority of the students entered the *Adelante* program with English reading score below 50 and English writing score below 25 which indicates very limited ability to read and write English. As the data above suggest, after one year of instruction, most of the students (1995–96 class), made significant progress both in reading and writing-most of them had English reading scores higher than 60 and English writing scores above 40. According to the normative interpretation of LAS scores and cutoff levels, (see Duncan & De Avila, 1988), they were Limited Readers and Non-Writers in English.

What were the changes in the students' achievements in the content areas as measured by the Spanish Assessment of Basic Education (SABE) test during each of the implementation years?

Students achievements in Math and Reading were measured by the SABE test. **Tables 9** and **10** detail the changes in students' NCE scores by grade level and by school year on the SABE Reading and Math subtests during the 1993–94 through 1995–96 school years.

The SABE test data depicted in Tables 9 and 10 suggest that overall the students in *Adelante* Program made significant progress both in reading and in math during each of the three implementation years. Spe-

Table 8: *t-test* Analysis Comparing Pre and Post LAS Reading and Writing English Scores for 1995–96

	Reading		Writing	
Grade	N	Mean Difference	N	Mean Score
6th	25	-3.4	22	5.6
7th	43	21.7***	44	21.2***
8th	21	14.2***	22	19.0***
Total/Mean	91	12.8***	90	16.7***

*p<.01 **p<.001 ***p<.0001

Tables 9: *t-test* Analysis Comparing Pre and Post NCE scores by grade level and by school year on the SABE Reading subtest during the 1993–94 through 1995–96 school years

School Year	Number of Students	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Mean Change	t-value	p-value*
93–94	76	39.91	43.85	3.91	4.08	>.0001
94–95	84	35.30	38.30	3.00	3.10	.0020
95-96	93	37.19	42.09	4.89	5.91	>.0001

* p<.05 is a statistically significant difference.

Tables 10: *t-test* Analysis Comparing Pre and Post NCE Scores by Grade Level and by School Year on the SABE Math Subtest in 1993–94 through 1995–96

School Year	Number of Students	Pre-Test*	Post-Test*	Mean Change	t-value	p-value*
93–94	56	38.20	42.32	4.12	2.19	.03
94–95	83	35.90	43.55	7.65	4.60	.0001
95-96	94	36.29	40.68	4.39	2.65	.0094

*p<.05 is a statistically significant difference.

cifically, students in the program gained about 4 NCE points in Spanish reading proficiency, and in math students gained about 6 NCE points.

When we disagregate the SABE scores by school year we notice that in reading, the largest gains were made in 1995–96 and in math the largest gains were made during 1994–95.

What was the 1995–96 mean attendance of the *Adelante* students and what was the difference in attendance rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group for the three implementation years?

Table 11 depicts the mean attendance rates of the *Adelante* students and of the comparison group for the last three school years (see participants description in the Methods section).

As can be seen in Table 11, the average attendance of the *Adelante* students during the last three school years was about 96% (included are those students that participated in the program for at least 135 instructional days). When the *Adelante* students' attendance rates were compared to the attendance rates of the comparison group, it was found that the comparison group had on average a similar attendance rate to the *Adelante* group. Only in 1995–96 the difference in attendance rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group almost reached statistical significance. In that year the *Adelante* group had a 96.0% attendance while the comparison group had a 94.8% attendance rate.

To identify possible effects of the program on future performance of the *Adelante* graduates (students that were promoted to high school), a follow-up analysis was conducted on their Attendance and promotion percentages. **Table 12** depicts a comparison between the *Adelante* graduates and the comparison group (the 1993–94 and the 194–95 graduates) on attendance rates.

As can be seen in Table 12, no significant differences on attendance rates were found between the *Adelante* graduates and the respective comparison groups. It should be noted, however, that the 1994–95 *Adelante* graduates had considerably low attendance-78.7%, as compared to 88.9% in the comparison group.

What were the 1995–96 promotion rates of the *Adelante* students and what was the difference of promotion rates between the *Adelante* group and the comparison group for the three implementation years?

Table 13 depicts the promotion rates (not including 'placed' students) of the *Adelante* students and of the comparison groups (see participants description

Table 11: Mean Attendance of the Adelante and the Comparison Groups 1993–96

School Year	Number of Students		Mean Attendance		Mean Difference	t-Value	p-value
	Adelante	Comparison	Adelante	Comparison			
93–94	82	159	97.0%	96.0%	1.0%	1.14	0.25
94–95	93	148	95.2%	96.2%	-1.0%	-1.66	0.10
95–96	92	196	96.0%	94.8%	1.2%	1.91	0.06

Table 12: A Comparison Between the Attendance Rates of the Adelante Graduates (93–94 and 94–95) and the Respective Comparison Groups

Grade	Number of Students		Mean Attendance		Mean Difference	t-Value	p-value
	Adelante	Comparison	Adelante	Comparison			
9*	27	73	87.1	86.7	0.4	0.14	.89
10*	12	19	91.0	89.8	1.2	0.33	.74
9**	17	33	78.7	88.9	-10.2	-1.66	.11

* 1993–94 class ** 1994–95 class

in the Methods section) for each of the implementation years .

As can be seen in Table 13 the promotion rates of the *Adelante* students were between 84% in 1995–96 to 94% in 1993–94. When the *Adelante* students were compared to the comparison groups, in each of the implementation years the students in the *Adelante* program were promoted in higher percentages than the students in the comparison groups. The difference in promotion rates between the *Adelante* and the comparison groups was between 1% in 1994–95 to 5% in 1993–94.

To identify possible effects of the program on future performance of the *Adelante* graduates, a follow-up analysis was conducted on their promotion percentages. **Table 14** (see next page) depicts a comparison between the *Adelante* graduates and the respective comparison groups on promotion rates.

As can be seen in Table 14, lower percentages of *Adelante* graduates were promoted as compared to graduates of the comparison groups. In particular, the difference in promotion rates between the *Adelante* Graduates and the comparison groups was between -7% for the 93–94 graduates and -25% for the 94–95 graduates (who were ninth graders in 1995–56). The comparison of promotion data between the *Adelante* and the comparison groups should be qualified by the incomplete data for considerable number of students in both groups.

What were the academic achievements of the *Adelante* graduates on the 1995–96 TAAS and what were the differences between the *Adelante* graduates and the comparison group?

To assess the potential effects of the *Adelante* program on the academic performance of the project graduates, the TAAS scores (NCE for reading and math, scale score for writing) of students who were transitioned from the *Adelante* program to all English classes in middle and high schools were compared to

Table 13: Promotion Rates of the Adelante and the Comparison Groups for the 1993–94 through 1995–96 School Years

School Year	Number of Students		Percent Promoted		Mean Difference
	Adelante	Comparison	Adelante	Comparison	
93–94	77	141	94%	89%	5%
94–95	93	148	88%	87%	1%
95–96	94	239	84%	82%	2%

Table 14: Promotion Rates of the Adelante Graduates and the Comparison Groups for the 1993–94 through 1995–96 School Years

Class	Grade	Number of Students		Percent Promoted		Mean
		Adelante	Comparison	Adelante	Comparison	Difference
1993–94	9	14	40	42%	49%	-7%
	10	8	15	61%	65%	-4%
1994–95	9	5	19	25%	50%	-25%

* 1993–94 class ** 1994–95 class

students in the comparison groups at the same grade levels (that were created in 1993–94 and in 1994–95). The results of these comparisons are presented in **Table 15**.

The TAAS results depicted in Table 15 indicate that in three out of nine comparisons the *Adelante* graduates outperformed students in the comparison group and in one case the students in the comparison group outperformed the *Adelante* graduates. On TAAS Reading *Adelante* graduates in grades seven and eight from the 94–95 and the 1993–94 classes, respectively, scored higher than their counterparts in the respective comparison groups. On the Math test only the seventh graders from the 1994–95 *Adelante* class received higher scores than students in the respective comparison group. On the writing test the tenth graders in the comparison group of the 1993–94 class performed higher than the *Adelante* graduates. In general, the percent *Adelante* graduates, who passed the minimum requirements of the TAAS, was less than 30% in the reading and writing subtests and about 40% in the math subtest.

How were the 1995–96 parents involved in the program and what were their perceptions of this involvement and of the program?

A major component of the *Adelante* program was the active involvement of parents in the education of their children. Parental involvement was accomplished in several ways. The primary mechanism for parent involvement were the meetings that were

Table 15: Comparison of the Adelante Graduates with the Comparison Group on the 1995–96 TAAS Performance

	Grade	Adelante		Comparison		t-test		
		n	NCE	n	NCE	Diff.	t	p
Reading	7*	11	33.6	14	18.8	14.8	3.12	.005
	8**	7	33.3	11	21.8	11.5	3.57	.003
	10**	10	25.9	16	28.7	2.8	-.52	.606
Math	7*	11	43.8	14	29.0	14.8	2.90	.008
	8**	7	43.4	10	40.2	3.2	.47	.650
	10**	12	43.7	16	36.9	6.8	.88	.390
		n	Scale Score	n	Scale Score	Diff.	t	p
Writing	8*	14	1441	9	1396	45	.92	.371
	8**	10	1412	13	1337	75	1.53	.142
	10**	12	1354	16	1487	133	-2.58	.016

* 94–95 Class ** 93–94 Class

conducted throughout the school year. Table 16 details the subjects and the number of parents that attended the parent involvement meetings.

Table 16: Subjects and the number of parents that attended the parent involvement meetings in 1995–96

Subject	Date	Number of Parents
Introduction to Adelante: Program and Staff Use of Uniforms Rules of School and Cluster Detention Procedures Volunteer for Parent/Teacher Discipline Committee Fund Raisers	9/28/95	57
Schoolwide Open House Grades Students' conduct	10/11/95	75
Schoolwide Open House Stop the Violence Increase the Peace Week Padres con Poder - Luis Casares	11/15/96	19
Schoolwide Open House Grades Students' Conduct	1/19/96	61
Adelante Parent Meeting Field Trips Hispanic Forum Study Tips for Parents-SEDL	2/8/96	28
Adelante Parent Meeting for At Risk students only	4/18/96	20
Adelante Parent Meeting Summer School Parent Survey Awards Presentation	5/23/96	49

When considering the number of parents attending the meetings, we need to mention that several parents had more than one child in the program. In addition, the staff mentioned that the attendance in the *Adelante* con Ganas parent meetings was significantly greater than all the other parent involvement meetings at that school. Therefore, we may conclude that the data in Table 16 indicates that the 1995–96 *Adelante* parent meetings were well attended.

The degree of the 1995–96 parents' satisfaction from the meetings was inferred from answers to questions 3A and 3B on the parent survey (see Appendix D). The answers indicated high degree of satisfaction from the meetings. Specifically, there was strong agreement with the statements "The parents' meetings were very helpful" and "I learned many important things in the parent meetings".

When asked "What are the three most important things that you learned at the parents involvement meetings?" the parents indicated three main areas of learning that took place in the meetings (each is followed by quotes from the 1995–96 parents' comments):

- Improving the communication between parents and children, motivating children to go to school and complete homework
  - What attitude to take when the children need attention.
  - I learn how to motivate my child to do their homework.
  - The responsibility that parents have to support their children
  - To talk to my children regarding their problems
  - How to motivate my child to keep going to school
- Feedback and information on my child's behavior, academic performance, and social interaction at school
  - How to educate our children, finding out how they do their homework.
  - They provide good information about the improvements of my child, and this helps to take advantage of the program.
  - I learn which are the important things that my child needs to learn to advance in school.
- Improvement of communication between parents and teachers
  - To know how much understanding between teachers and parents exist and how well teachers can orient parents.
  - Communication between teachers and parents
- Prevention of involvement with gangs, drugs and other high-risk behaviors
  - ... and not to be hanging around with bad crowd.
  - Which precautions to take so our children won't get involved in gangs or drugs.

In order to improve parent involvement , parents were asked: "Please give us your suggestions on how

we can improve parent involvement meetings in the future?" The suggestions were in several areas:

- Encourage more parents to participate or make participation mandatory
- Increase active collaboration between parents and teachers during the meetings
- Increase the number of parent—teacher meetings
- Place phone calls a day before the meeting.

To gauge potential changes in parents' satisfaction during the three implementation years, the mean scores for each item on the parent survey for each school year are provided in **Table 17** (on a scale in which 1-Strongly Disagree and 5-Strongly Agree).

The data depicted in Table 17 indicate that overall parents' satisfaction with all aspects of the *Adelante* program was very high. Furthermore, as the program progresses from year to year, parents' perceptions of the program enhanced considerably. Specifically, parents' agreement levels with all the statements were the highest on the 1995–96 survey.

Another source of data for analyzing the parent involvement component of the program was the 1995–96 teacher survey. Teachers indicated that in addition to parent involvement meetings, parents were invited and came to discipline committee, to field trips, and came to class as guest speakers.

Table 17: Average of Parents' Response to the Adelante Student Surveys During 1993–1996

	Survey Item	93–94	94–95	95–96
A.	The parents' meetings were very helpful.	4.31	4.03	4.62
B.	I learned many important things in the parents meetings.	3.91	4.19	4.58
C.	My child is learning a great deal in school.	4.28	4.41	4.73
D.	I would like to have more parent meetings.	3.97	4.14	4.67
E.	My child is advancing a lot in school.	4.34	4.13	4.70
F.	The teachers help my child advance in her/his studies.	4.27	4.33	4.68
G.	The teachers expect my child to work hard in school.	4.25	4.51	4.70
H.	My child is very happy to go to school.	4.27	4.47	4.69

What were the 1995–96 students' perceptions of and reactions towards the program?

Three sources of data were analyzed in order to discern the perceptions and reactions of the students to the *Adelante* program. The direct source was the Students' Survey (see Appendix B) and the two indirect sources were the Staff Survey and the Parent Survey (See Appendices C and D). We will first address the results of the student survey.

The student survey included both open and multiple-choice questions. The multiple-choice questions included 12 Likert-type scaled questions (from 1-Strongly Disagree, to 5-Strongly Agree). The averages of the students' responses to the student surveys in the three implementation years are depicted in **Table 18**.

The survey questions addressed several areas. First, students reported a high degree of satisfaction with their school and their teachers (Q1: $4.32 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.69; Q9: $3.75 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.18). When asked about their interaction with their teachers, students felt that their teachers expect them to work hard (Q11: $4.41 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.65) and felt that their teachers help them do their best (Q3: $4.16 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.68). The students also reported very high degree of agreement with the statement "I feel that I made a lot of progress in my studies since the beginning of the year" (Q6: $4.36 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.41).

However, students felt that they still need more help from their teachers to improve their grades (Q8: $4.00 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.14). The relatively low degree of agreement with the statement "My teachers think that I am important" (Q7: $3.45 \leq$ Mean ≤ 3.71) also suggest that students needed more encouragement from their teachers.

When asked about the language of instruction, students reported considerable satisfaction with Spanish instruction (Q5: $3.89 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.14). However, significant number of students indicated that they would like to move to all English instruction (Q12: $3.41 \leq$ Mean ≤ 3.70). In relation to the social network of students, it was found, as expected, that most of the students' friends were from their class (Q10: $4.26 \leq$ Mean ≤ 4.32). When the 1993–94, 1994–95, and 1995–96 results were compared to each other no major differences were identified.

In each of the student surveys during the three implementation years, students were asked to comment on how to improve the program. The recommendations for improvements by the 1993–94 and 1994–95 students were reported in the previous evaluation reports. The 1995–96 students' recommendations will be discussed in the last research question that summarizes all participants recommendations. However, it should be mentioned here that, as in the previous two implementation years, many of the 1995–96 students expressed general satisfaction with the program. The following quotes are taken from comments made by the 1995–96 students.

> I'm very happy with the program because I'm speaking English this year, because last year I didn't know anything.
>
> We are fine the way we are.
>
> I like it, it has good teachers.
>
> This program has helped me and is still helping me. It has excellent teachers that make you want to learn.
>
> I wish the program would expand to other schools, so other students can benefit from the program.
>
> The program is very good it helps the students with their work and problems, and also give them encouragement.

Table 18: Average of Students' Response to the Adelante Student Surveys During 1993–1996

	Question	93–94	94–95	95–96
1.	I like to come to school every day.	4.69	4.47	4.32
2.	I do not understand some of the words my teachers are using.	3.01	2.92	3.26
3.	My teachers help me do my best.	4.68	4.51	4.16
4	I feel very good about myself.	4.54	4.29	4.36
5.	I enjoy learning in Spanish.	4.14	3.89	3.96
6.	I feel that I made a lot of progress in my studies since the beginning of the year.	4.41	4.38	4.36
7.	My teachers think that I am important.	3.71	3.49	3.45
8.	I need more help to improve my grades.	4.00	4.14	4.09
9.	I like my teachers.	4.18	4.18	3.75
10.	Most of my friends are from this class.	4.26	4.30	4.32
11.	My teachers expect me to work hard.	4.65	4.41	4.45
12.	I would like all my instruction in English.	3.66	3.70	3.41

An indirect data source for students' satisfaction with the program came from answers to the question on the Staff survey "How do students feel about this program?" and, "What do students say about the program?" As the following quotes from the 1995–96 staff survey (which are very similar to previous years' answers) suggest, the staff perceived the students to be very satisfied with the program:

> Students on the whole appreciate the opportunity to continue their academic education while they are learning English.
>
> Comfortable & well at home-seem to be excited
>
> The students are very positive about the program and enjoy their activities.
>
> Because I have reinforced and stressed the use of English, with the level II class, they feel that they are accomplishing something. This group, contrary to last year's group, is very happy with the program. Level I students present a different challenge: it is an academically diverse group. We have two students with no schooling at all; one with just two years; four with irregular four years of schooling.. Overall, all of them seem to be very happy and believe that they are improving themselves.
>
> The students feel very conformable, relax, and confident.
>
> The students say that they would not change anything. The students feel that the program has helped them a lot during the time they were here. Also the students think that the program helped them a lot when they came from their natives countries.

The balance between English and Spanish instruction came up in staff's answers (during the last three staff surveys and see also students' improvement recommendations). It is interesting to note that from the teachers point of view, the emphasis on Spanish was well received by most of the students:

> Students really enjoy the program. They feel comfortable of the fact that they are able to communicate with someone who speaks their own language. (Majority Spanish-speaking students)

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Our students feel conformable, secure and reassured because we can communicate with them in their own language.

They are very enthusiastic of learning the content area classes in their [home language]. They are passing, but if they were thought in English some would be passing, but others would be failing.

The students are very glad that they are able to do their studies in their native language. They leave the program with the knowledge that they can master the different subjects.

What were the perceived strengths of the *Adelante con Ganas* program during the three implementation years?

The answer to this question is based on three main sources of data: the staff survey, interviews with the program coordinator and the school principal, and class observations. These data elements suggested that the strengths of the *Adelante* program for the last three school years were in three general areas: the external and internal support, the learning context, and the social-emotional context.

- **The External and Internal Support**. The data indicated that there was strong external and internal support for the *Adelante* program. The major external source of support was the Title VII grant money awarded to the district by the office of Bilingual Education and Minority Affairs in the U.S. Department of Education. The grant money was used to hire competent staff, buy appropriate instructional materials, purchase computers and a copy machine, and conduct staff training. The Houston Independent School District provided the *Adelante* program with internal support in the form of computer software, laser disk players materials, lab materials and supplies, and staff training. There was a feeling among staff members that the district administration and the school staff had a strong motivation to provide any help that was needed. In addition, the Multi-lingual Resource Center (MRC) provided the program with ESL and Bilingual instructional materials and computer training. The following quotes from the staff's answers to the 1995–96 survey exemplify the external and internal support:

  The most important support we received was from the district's Mulitlingual Resource Center. The personnel there assisted in finding the vendors who could provide the appropriate first language materials.

  Bilingual science books, computer programs, computer software, RAM memory for computers, Materials for my classes (color, water color, poster boards, tapes, disks, paper, etc.). They have been very helpful, the students feel confidence when they have the materials to work with. Sometimes, the students do not have the possibilities to get the materials. Having the materials help the students to improve the performance in class and the learning process.

  I think technology is very important for the students; therefore, more computers and software programs could help more to the students learning.

  The most important support that I received the last 3 years is the constant encouragement from Dr. Linda Velasquez. She has always been there to answer all my questions.

- **The Learning Context**. The data suggested that the learning context, that was designed by the project coordinator and implemented by the program teachers, the content resource specialists and aides, was a major contributor to the initial success of the program. Specifically, the combination of the bilingual and the ESL instruction and learning materials was one of the major contributors to the academic success of the recently immigrant students, who otherwise would fail on most content area tests. The following quotes from the staff's answers to the 1995–96 staff survey exemplify the learning context:

  As from the beginning, the bilingual staff and instructional materials are key in providing academic instruction for these students in their own language while they are learning English. Without this first language instruction, virtually all of these students would get behind in their academics.

  The major strength for this year is that the students will receive and develop in their first language. This allows the student and parents to become more involved with the participation of the school.

  Students do not have an excuse to not study, as concepts are taught and reinforced in their language. This has raised their self-confidence and self-esteem greatly. Also, their parents seem to feel more at ease and understood. Their participation increases with these feelings.

- **The Social-Emotional Context.** The data indicated that the program staff led by the project coordinator were successful in creating a cohesive cluster with a social emotional context that was conducive to effective learning. This context included the emotional involvement and commit-

ment of the teaching staff as well as the parent body of the *Adelante* program. The following quotes from the staff's answers to the 1995–96 survey exemplify the learning context:

> Feeling of comfort/intimacy/helpfulness
>
> The most important support that I received the last 3 years is the constant encouragement from Dr. Linda Velasquez. She has always been there to answer all my questions.
>
> Our strength lies in working as a team.
>
> As always, the strength of the program is in the staff. We work well together, and are always willing to help each other and other teachers and parents.
>
> This program has reached children who would have felt frustration and failure if set in the classic environment. To see them accomplish academic and social goals while adapting to a strange and new environment is the aim of every teacher. I am honored to work in such environment, and with open -minded people such as Dr. L. Velasquez and Ms. G. Alvarez.

In her remarks during the interview that was conducted in May 1996 the school principal summarized some of the strengths of the *Adelante* program during 1993–96 school years:

> Academic performance and promotion rate has improved because [the] lack of English has not inhibited academic learning. Self-esteem and attendance improves because students do not feel alienated by lack of communication ability; [they] also feel better because grades are better. Major strength is [that the] students [are] able to continue to learn and progress in academic content while they learn English.

This evaluator's observations during the 1993–94, 1994–95, and 1995–96 school years were very consistent with findings that were detailed above. Specifically, in terms of external support it was observed that in the last three school years the *Adelante* classes had the ESL and bilingual instructional materials that were needed, including books, computer hardware and software, testing materials, and consumable materials. Teachers were very satisfied from the support that they got from the district administration, as well as from the school administration. As for the learning context, it was evident during the class observations that the students in all classes were engaged in the subjects that were taught and most of them worked diligently on their tasks and projects. The class environments were very organized, clean and the classrooms' walls were decorated with grade-level appropriate instructional pictures, graphs, photographs and students' projects. During the class visits, one could have a clear sense of learning community among students and staff members in the *Adelante* program.

How were the recommendations of the 1994–95 evaluation report implemented in the program during the 1995–96 school year?

The 1994–95 *Adelante...con Ganas* evaluation report made several recommendations. Each of the three major recommendations is specified and is followed by the current status and changes made concerning that item during the 1995–96 school year.

- Results of the LAS test suggest that the English oral proficiency of most students in the program was at the Non-English Speakers level. Teachers expressed a need to intensify the ESL component of their training. Students and parents expressed a need to learn more English. Therefore, the ESL staff training and instructional effort should be continued and intensified. The staff may consider offering after school ESL classes for students and their parents.

  Changes implemented in 1995–96:
  curriculum was adjusted to incorporate more English at each level, particularly in the eighth grade level II (intermediate level) where English incorporation was accelerated.
- The academic progress of the students in the *Adelante* program during the 1994–95 school year was lower than during the 1993–94 school year. One process that may have contributed to this result was the continuous enrollment of low schooled students throughout the school year. Therefore, the instructional staff should decide on a deadline beyond which no student will enter the program unless there are enough instructional resources to accommodate additional students. In addition, the *Adelante* staff should vigilantly assess the new students and decide on the individual remedial needs of each student.

  Changes implemented in 1995–96:
  because of the need for this program within the school district, students were continuously referred to the project from other middle schools. A number of these referred students were low-schooled or students with special needs. With no other similar program to address their needs the

school and project staff felt compelled to accept these students into the project. However, when the seventh grade classes reached capacity, that grade level was reluctantly closed to new students. Evaluation of these students was more detailed and when identified as preliterate or low-schooled, an individual instructional and tutoring program was developed for each.

- The *Adelante* students were concerned about discipline, school safety, and school uniform. Therefore, the *Adelante* staff should assess the current discipline and uniform polices and implement the appropriate changes. One idea that should be considered by the staff is forming a committee, comprised of *Adelante* staff with students and parents representatives. This committee should review the current *Adelante* policies concerning discipline and uniforms and make the appropriate changes.
  Changes Implemented in 1995–96: in 1995–96 the entire school moved to a school uniform. A school-wide committee was established and included school staff, students, and parents.

What were the recommendations of program staff, students, and parents in 1995–96, for improving the quality of the program implementation?

Although specific recommendations for changes in training and parent involvement were addressed by previous questions, the staff, students, and parents had additional recommendations that will be described in this section. The answers to the questions "What are the major weaknesses of the program (during 1995–96 and during the last three years)?" and "Please add any comments concerning this program that you would like to make?" on the staff survey and the principal interview, were used to generate the recommendations for program improvements. The staff recommendations were in the following areas (each is followed by representative quotes from the staff comments):

- Accelerated instruction of low schooled students and improved referral procedure for learning disabled students. The *Adelante* staff indicated on the 1995–96 survey that as the program became more publicized around the District more recently immigrant students who were low-schooled and/or learning disabled tried to enroll in the program. Consequently, there was a need for more training in instruction of low-schooled and referral procedure for learning disabled students.

  We are getting increasing numbers of pre-literate and low-schooled students as well as a number of students of with obvious and sometimes documented learning disabilities. Our program for these students needs considerable more development.

  If there is a weakness, I feel it is that students come to this country ill schooled, and often the district does not inform them about our service, or does so after the student has been here some time.

- Physical and psychological integration of the *Adelante* cluster. Several staff members noted on the 1995–96 survey that the physical distance of the 6th grade classes from the 7th and 8th grade classes (different floors in the school building) contributed and/or intensified communication problems within the *Adelante* staff.

  The weakest point, in my opinion, is having the 6th grade team as a separate cluster. We should be all working together and in close contact. By this I mean, we should have 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes close to each other.

  The lack of communication between the 7th/8th cluster with the 6th grade cluster.

  Six grade worked as a separate cluster from seventh and eighth grade, so, the students showed different attitudes that made the teaching a little difficult, especially the discipline

The 1995–96 Students indicated their concerns and suggested improvements in several areas (each is followed by representative quote):

- Expand English instruction. As noted by students in previous years, the 1995–96 students indicated a need to expand English instruction.

  To give us more work. To teach more English and less Spanish.

  We need more English in all classes.

  The teachers need to speak more English to the students, so we can speak and practice it more.

- Improve student—teacher interaction. For the first time in the last three years students mentioned on the 1995–96 specific complaints regarding teachers' interaction with students.

  I would like for [teacher A] to be more cooperative and to learn to respect us as students, and to watch the way he talks to us.

> I would like for [teacher. B] to give us easy problems and to tell us when are we having an exam. [Teacher C) to be more cooperative and to tell us the date of an exam.
>
> That the teacher should not give us detention, and should not get made at us, and that teachers should use uniforms. They should speak to us nice and in Spanish. I also would like for the teacher to be more happy and not as grouchy as she is.
>
> I wish the teacher would explain better and not get irritated when we say we don't understand.

As indicated earlier the 1995–95 parents were generally very satisfied with the program. The only two improvement suggestions mentioned by more than one parent were: increasing parent participation in the parent meetings and continue to offer the bilingual program in the middle school.

Discussion

In August 1993, the Houston Independent School District received from the Office of Bilingual and Minority Education at the U.S. Department of Education a three-years grant for implementing a Title VII program. The grant was used to implement a transitional bilingual program at Burbank Middle School. The goal of the current evaluation report was to assess the implementation and the effectiveness of the *¡Adelante...con Ganas!* project in Burbank middle school during the 1993–94 through the 1995–96 school years. The following discussion will summarize and integrate the major results of the evaluation and the inferences that we can make based on these findings. The recommendation section will follow with summary of recommendations derived from the evaluation findings.

Resources: Staff Qualification and Training, Instructional Program and Materials

Several findings of this evaluation suggest that the staff who were recruited and trained to teach in the *Adelante* program, were qualified for its mission and made a difference in the academic life of the students in the program. Specifically, the progress that students made in the content areas (see next section), results of the staff surveys, parent surveys, and the student surveys, suggested that the program's staff was well trained and had effectively implemented the *Adelante* instructional program.

Answers to the staff survey indicated that the training activities were very beneficial for attainment of the program goals. Based on students' academic progress we may infer that the instructional program that was detailed in the introduction to this report was effectively implemented. Teachers and students were very positive about the instructional program and materials. Students' and parents' high satisfaction from school and the teachers, suggest that both the instructional program and the teachers who implemented the *Adelante* program raised the academic motivation and promoted the social development of students.

Observed Student Progress

In order to analyze the students' academic progress we need to review first their academic level in the beginning of the school year. The results of the LAS Spanish and English tests and the SABE test indicated that during each of the three implementation years *Adelante* students started the program with very low language proficiency, both in Spanish and in English, and low academic level. In spite of the very low school readiness of theses recently immigrant adolescents, several findings in this evaluation suggest that substantial academic progress has been made by most of the project students.

Specifically, the significant progress students have made on the English LAS test (oral, reading and writing) and on the SABE reading and math subtests, suggest that students advanced considerably in these areas. In addition, teachers' observations suggest that the project students have shown steady progress in English, while demonstrating academic growth. Those project students identified as "preliterate" or "low-schooled" have exhibited increased basic literacy skills as noted in their achievement scores.

Two correlates of students academic performance in school are attendance and promotion. The *Adelante* students' mean attendance over the last three school years was 96%. Although, it was not significantly higher than the comparison group's attendance, it was very close to the 97% goal of all HISD students.

The promotion data indicated that promotion rates of the *Adelante* students were between 84% in 1995–96 to 94% in 1993–94. In each of the implementation years the students in the *Adelante* program were promoted in higher percentages than the students in the comparison groups.

The overall conclusion from the integration of the above findings is that during the three implementation years the students (who enrolled at least 135 instruc-

tional days) made considerable strides in their academic performance both in the content and the language areas.

Parental Involvement

The parental involvement activities were an integral component of the *Adelante* program for the three implementation years years. The parental involvement meetings focused on reports regarding students performance at school, discipline procedures, and risk behavior awareness.

The findings of this evaluation documented the high level of participation and satisfaction of parents with theses activities. Most of the parents who participated in the parent involvement meetings were highly satisfied from the content and from of the meetings. Both the staff and parents recognized the importance of parent involvement in the program and its contribution to students academic achievement and growth.

Although all involved including the school principal praised the *Adelante* program's parental involvement, it was clear that there was always room for improvement. Specifically, both parents and staff indicated that they need to increase the participation of other parents in the activities offered by the program.

Contributors to Effective Program Implementation

The findings of this evaluation and previous two years evaluations suggest that the contributors to the effective implementation of the *Adelante* program were in three interdependent areas: the external and internal support, the learning context, and the social-emotional context. The strong support for the *Adelante* program was based on two main monetary sources: the U.S. Department of Education's Title VII grant and the in-kind contribution of the Houston Independent School District. The combined annual budget of about $350,000 enabled the recruiting of well-qualified teachers, offering adequate training, acquiring of appropriate instructional materials, conducting parental involvement meeting and field trips. In addition to the financial support, there was a feeling among staff members that the district administration and the school staff had a strong motivation to provide any help that was needed.

The abundance in external support for the *Adelante* program contributed the creation of an effective learning context. Specifically, the well designed bilingual-transitional program could not have been implemented without the additional bilingual teachers, the content resource specialists, and the aides who were recruited specifically for the *Adelante* program. In addition, the Spanish written materials in the content areas were also an important component of the effective learning context.

The students' progress in the *Adelante* program is also attributed to the strong and warm social-emotional context that was created by the program staff and that was supported by the school and district staff. The students and staff felt that they were all part of one community. This feeling of community was especially important for recent immigrants who comprised the majority of students in the program. In other school environments recent immigrants who are non-English Speakers have found it very hard to be integrated into the English speaking population. Thus, the *Adelante* program enabled a smoother transition into the American school culture. To conclude, in order for a program like the *Adelante* project to be successful, the three areas mentioned above: external and internal support, learning context, and social emotional context, need to be provided for, integrated, and implement, all at the same time.

Obstacles to Effective Program Implementation

Considering that this was the third year of implementation of a bilingual program in a middle school context, the findings of this evaluation do not point to any major obstacle that prevented or interfered with the effective implementation of the *Adelante* program. However, there are several interdependent areas that will need continued attention and adjustment. Although some of the problems were already addressed by program staff in preparing for the forth year of implementation, we will mention them below. A summary of recommendations will follow in the next section.

The first area of concern was the low academic level and the very low English proficiency of many of the students in the beginning of each of the school years. It seems that those low-schooled students need more intensive remedial instruction than what was initially planned. Therefore, the *Adelante* staff should vigilantly assess new students and decide on individual or group remedial instructional plans. In terms of staff training, there is a clear need to intensify the ESL training for the *Adelante* staff, particularly in the area of pre-literate strategies.

The second area of concern was physical distance of the six grade classes from the rest of the classes that may have contributed to low psychological integration of the *Adelante* cluster, in particular, during the 1995–96 school year. Therefore, it is suggested that efforts will be made to house all the *Adelante* students on the same floor and initiate more cluster activities that have the potential to enhance the psychological integration of all students in the program.

The *Adelante* students raised two issues that concerned them and need action from the *Adelante* staff. Students asked for expansion of English instruction and improvement in teacher–student interactions. Therefore, the staff need to consider means to intensify English instruction. The program staff need to evaluate teacher–students and interaction, particularly during 1995–96 school years and implement actions that will improve relationships between teachers and students in the program.

Recommendations

1. Results of the language and academic assessments of immigrant students who enrolled in the *Adelante* program indicated very low Spanish, English, and academic proficiency. The *Adelante* staff with support from the Multilingual and Accelerated Instruction Department need to consider expansion of the remedial services that can be offered to these students and their parents.

2. Results of the LAS test suggest that the English oral proficiency of most students in the program after one year of instruction was at the Non-English Speakers level. Teachers expressed a need to intensify the ESL component of their training. Students and parents expressed a need to learn more English. Therefore, the ESL staff training and instructional effort should be continued and intensified. The staff may consider offering after school ESL classes for students and their parents.

3. The two six grade classes were located in rooms that were distant from the rest of the *Adelante* classes. It is suggested to house all the *Adelante* students in close physical proximity and increase the number of the cluster activities so that the physical and psychological integration will be enhanced.

4. Students mentioned several incidents of friction with teachers in the program during the 1995–96 school year. Therefore, the program staff need to assess together with students the relationships between teachers and students, design and implement means to improve student–teacher interactions.

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Appendices

Appendix A: The ¡Adelante...con Ganas! Major Textbooks

6th grade
Language Arts: *Lenguaje -Ediciones SM* - DDL Books
Teseros de mi Raza. Bilingual Education Services
Spanish Reading: *Portales* - Houghton Mifflen Company
ESL: *Bridge to Communication- Middle School Kit* - Santillana Publishing
Math: *Las Matematicas de Addison-Wesley* - Addison-Wesley
Science: *Windows on Science* , Optical Data Corp.
Descubre las Maravillas -Scott-Foresman Publishing
Social Studies: *Ecos del Pasado* -Houghton Mifflen Company

7th grade
Language Arts: *Comunicandonos 7* - Grupo Editorial Norma
Spanish Reading: *Momentos Literarios 7* , Lectorum Publications
ESL: *Bridge to Communication- Middle School Kit* - Santillana Publishing
Math: *Matemáticas y Realidad -1- Ediciones Pedagogicas* - Los Andes Books
Science: *Windows on Science*, Optical Data Corp.
Science and Technology Plus Green?? (Bilingual Version) - Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.
Social Studies: *Tejas, los Estados Unidos y el Mundo* - Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Publishing

8th grade
Language Arts: *Comunicandonos 8* , Grupo Editorial Norma
Spanish Reading: *Momentos Literarios 8*, Lectorum Publications
ESL: *Bridge to Communication- Middle School Kit* - Santillana Publishing
Math: *Matemáticas y Realidad -2- Ediciones Pedagogicas* - Los Andes Books
Science: *Windows on Science*, Optical Data Corp.
Science and Technology Plus (Bilingual Version), Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.
Social Studies: *Los Estados Unidos: Su Historia y Su Gobierno*-Jarrett Publishing Company

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Appendix B: ¡Adelante...con Ganas!-Student Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: *The goal of this survey is to help us understand how you feel about the ¡ADELANTE...CON GANAS! program. We would appreciate you taking a few minutes to answer the questions in this survey. Your answers are very important to us. Please do not write your name on this survey so that your answers will be kept anonymous. When you have completed this survey, please use the enclosed envelope to return it to your teacher who will send it to the HISD Research and Evaluation Department.*

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Please use the scale below to tell us how you feel about the following statements.

1-Strongly Disagree **2**-Disagree **3**-Somewhat Agree **4**-Agree **5**-Strongly Agree

Circle ONE number for each sentence.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I like to come to school every day.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I do not understand some of the words my teachers are using.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My teachers help me do my best.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel very good about myself.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I enjoy learning in Spanish.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel that I made a lot of progress in my studies since the beginning of the year.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My teachers think that I am important.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I need more help to improve my grades.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I like my teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Most of my friends are from this class.	1	2	3	4	5
11. My teachers expect me to work hard.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I would like all my instruction in English.	1	2	3	4	5

13. In what grade are you? (4 Check one)
o 6th grade o 7th grade o 8th grade

(Continued)

Appendix B: ¡Adelante...con Ganas!-Student Survey–Continued

14. What is your age? (4 Check one)

9 o	10 o	11 o	12 o	13 o	14 o
15 o	16 o	17 o	18 o	19 o	20 o

15. What is your gender (4 Check one)? o Female o Male

16. To which ethnic group do you belong? (4 Check one)

Asian	African American	Hispanic	Native American	White
o	o	o	o	o

17. In which subject area(s) do you have trouble understanding the language of material? (4 Check all that apply)

Computers	Fine Arts	English	Language Arts	Math	Physical Education	Science	Social Studies
o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o

o Other (Please Specify)_____

18. If you have any other comments on how to improve the ¡ADELANTE..CON GANAS! program, please write them in the space below.

_____

_____

Thank you very much ¶for participating in this survey.

Appendix C: ¡Adelante...con Ganas! Staff Survey

¡Adelante...con Ganas!

1995-96 Staff Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: The goal of this survey is to understand how you feel about the implementation of the Bilingual program at Burbank Middle School. We would appreciate you devoting some of your time to answer the questions in this survey. Your answers are very important to us. Please write your name in the space below so that we can continue the assessment by interviewing you to clarify and elaborate some of your answers. Your responses will be held in strict confidence. When you complete this survey, please use the enclosed envelope to return it to the HISD Research and Evaluation Department.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Please write your answers below each question.
Use as much space as you need.

Your Name

A. Feedback on 1995-96 School Year

1. What training or inservices devoted to this program did you attend during 1995-96?

2. What program-related support services or materials did you receive from the district in 1995-96? How helpful was it? How can such support be improved?

3. What program-related support services or materials did you receive from the project coordinator? How helpful was it? How can such support be improved?

4. What changes have you implemented in your class during 1995-96 school year?

5. How do the 1995-96 students feel about this program? What do students say about the program?

6. How did you get your students' parents involved in the program during 1995-96?

7. In what way the 1995-96 school year was different for you from 1994-95?

8. What are the major strengths of the 95-96 Adelante Con Ganas program?

9. What are the major weaknesses of the 95-96 program?

(Continued)

Appendix C: ¡Adelante...con Ganas! Staff Survey–Continued

B. Feedback on Three-Year Implementation

When answering the questions below, pleas reflect back on the last three (two or one) years that you have been part of the instructional staff in the Adelante program.

1. What training activity stands out as being the most effective in helping you achieve the Adelante program goals? Why?

2. Is there any additional training activity that you would recommend to add the training program Adelante instructional staff? Please explain.

3. What was the most important support service you received during the last three years from either the district or from the project coordinator? Why?

4. Is there any additional instructional materials that you would recommend to add the Adelante program? Please explain.

5. Is there any additional support services that you would recommend to add the Adelante program? Please explain.

6. In your opinion, what have been the most important effects of the program on the students?

7. How can parent involvement be improved?

8. What have been the major strengths of the Adelante Con Ganas program during the last three years?

9. What are the major weaknesses of the program during the last three years?

10. Please add any comments concerning this program that you would like to make?

Thank you very much for participating in this survey.
Please return the disk in the enclosed envelope to
the Research and Evaluation Department.

Appendix D: ¡Adelante...con Ganas! Parents Survey

INSTRUCTIONS: *The goal of this survey is to understand how you feel about your involvement in the Bilingual program in which your daughter/son enrolled at Burbank Middle School. We would appreciate you devoting some of your precious time to answer the questions in this survey. Your answers are very important to us. Please do not write your name on this survey so that your answers will be confidential.* ***When you have completed this survey, please use the enclosed envelope and have your child return it to her/his teacher.***

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

1. **How many times were you invited to participate in a parent involvement meetings at Burbank middle school during 1993-94 school year?**

   o 1 o 3 o 5 o 7
   o 2 o 4 o 6

2. **How many times did you actually participate in a parent involvement meetings at Burbank middle school during 1993-94 school year?**

   o 1 o 3 o 5 o 7
   o 2 o 4 o 6

3. **Please use the scale below to tell us how you feel about the following statements.**

   1-Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Somewhat Agree 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree

Circle ONE number for each sentence.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A. The parents' meetings were very helpful.	1	2	3	4	5
B. I learnt many important things in the parents meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
C. My child is learning a great deal in school.	1	2	3	4	5
D. I would like to have more parent meetings.	1	2	3	4	5
E. My child is advancing a lot in school.	1	2	3	4	5
F. The teachers help my child advance in her/his studies.	1	2	3	4	5
G. The teachers expect my child to work hard in school.	1	2	3	4	5
H. My child is very happy to go to school.	1	2	3	4	5

4. **What are the three most important things that you leared at the parents involvement meetings?**

5. **Please give us your suggestions on how can we improve the parent involvement meetings in the future?**

6. **Any other comments concerning this program that you would like to add?**

Please put this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope and have your child return it to her/his teacher.

Thank you very much for participating in this survey.